THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) The names of the private steel companies which have imported machinery from 1991-92 onwards under various provisons of the EPCG Scheme are given in the statement attached. (*See* below) The CIF value of import licences issued to them is approximately Rs. 2580 Crores.

(c) and (d) As per provisions of Exim Policy, the import licence holders are required to fulfil export obligation over a period of time. Under the 15% and 10% duty concession of EPCG, the firms are required to complete the Export Obligation (EO) within a period of 5 years and under zero duty scheme over a period of 8 years. Zero duty scheme being put in practice only w.e.f. 1.4.95, the Export Obligation (EO) is expected to be fulfiled by 1.4.2003 and onwards. As per available information, the total value of exports executed so far is about Rs. 493 Crores.

Statement

1. M/s. Kalyani Steels Ltd.
2. M/s. Mukund Ltd.
3. M/s. Metalamen Pipe Mfg. Co. Ltd.
4. M/s. Tata Iron & Steel Co.
5. M/s. Sharpnex Engg.
6. M/s. Usha Martin Inds. Ltd.
7. M/s. National Steel Industries Ltd.
8. M/s. Bihar Alloy Steels Ltd.
9. M/s. Grandfoundry Ltd.
10. M/s. Ispat Profiles India Ltd.
11. M/s. Firth (India) Steel Co. Ltd.
12. M/s. Essar Gujarat Ltd.
13. M/s. Kusam Ingots and Alloys Ltd.
14. M/s. ISI Bars Ltd.
15. M/s. Gontermann Peipers (I) Ltd.
16. M/s. Sunflag Iron & Steel Co.
17. M/s. Vishnupriya Ind. Ltd.
18. M/s. Shri Precoated Steel Ltd.
19. M/s. Jindal Vijayanagr Steel
20. M/s. Sindia Steels Ltd.
21. M/s. Bhupendra Ind. Ltd.
22. M/s. Raymond Ltd.
23. M/s. Malvika Steel Ltd.
24. M/s. Nippon Denro Ltd.

Fall in prices of shares of SAIL

3054. SHRIAMTI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the price to book value ratio of the sahres of Steel Authority of India. Ltd. the only public sector steel giant has drastically fallen from 1.3% in 1993 to 0.5% in 1998;

(b) if so, what are the contributing factors responsible for the fall and to what extent; and

(c) what steps have been taken to arrest the fall?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Profitability of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has been declining due to the environment of sluggish market conditon with greater competition from imports, weakening of international prices and over supply conditions in domestic market. These factors have put great stress on SAIL's margins due to which the market price of SAIL's share has declined. Profits of SAIL declined from Rs. 588 crores in 1996-97 to Rs. 149 crores in 1997-98. During the period April-December 1998, SAIL has reported a loss of Rs.890 crores.

(c) SAIL has taken the following steps for improving the performance:

* Greater emphasis on cost control measures.
* Introduction of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) for employees.
* Market oriented production and product-mix.
* Improvement in techno-economic parameters.
* Increasing sales through aggressive and customer oriented marketing.
* Exploring new ways to bridge the resource gaps through business restructuring initiatives.